

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 10, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pompeo  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C., 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We write regarding the closure of the United States consulate in Chengdu following the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China's decision to revoke its license on July 24, 2020.<sup>1</sup> We are concerned that the consulate's closure will impede the U.S.'s ability to monitor conditions in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), and Tibetan areas in Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan provinces, as well as in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), often referred to as Xinjiang. As such, we urge the Department to send to Congress a strategy for continued monitoring of human rights in these regions.

As you know, the Chengdu consulate is situated further west than the United States' other five consular posts in China, including the embassy in Beijing. As the *New York Times* reported in July, this renders the Chengdu consulate our "most valuable diplomatic outpost for gathering information on Xinjiang and Tibet."<sup>2</sup> Without this critical vantage point, we are deeply concerned that it will be more difficult for the United States to assess human rights conditions in Tibet, where the Chinese government has long denied the Tibetan people their fundamental human rights and threatened the very existence of their culture, and the XUAR, where Chinese authorities have detained an estimated one million Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Hui, and other largely Muslim ethnic minorities.<sup>3</sup>

As Members of Congress focused on Tibetan human rights, we are concerned that the Chengdu consulate's closure may constitute yet another impediment to human rights monitoring in the region. Despite the enactment of the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act (P.L. 115-330) in 2018 and the State Department's efforts at implementation, access to the TAR and other Tibetan areas remains highly limited. As the Department reported on August 5, 2020, "the People's Republic of China (PRC) government systematically impeded travel to the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and Tibetan areas outside the TAR for U.S. diplomats and officials, journalists, and tourists in 2019."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ["The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs the U.S. to close the U.S. Consulate in Chengdu." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China. July 24, 2020.](#)

<sup>2</sup> ["China Orders U.S. to Shut Chengdu Consulate, Retaliating for Houston." \*New York Times\*. July 24, 2020.](#)

<sup>3</sup> ["U.S. Adds Sanctions Over Internment of Muslims in China." \*New York Times\*. July 31, 2020.](#)

<sup>4</sup> ["Report to Congress on Access to Tibetan Areas of the People's Republic of China \(PRC\), Sec. 4 of the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018, PL 115-330." U.S. Department of State, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. August 5, 2020.](#)

We are also concerned that the consulate's closure could make it more difficult to assess the situation in the XUAR. Earlier this year, Congress passed and the President signed the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020 (P.L. 116-145), which mandates reports to Congress on human rights in the XUAR.<sup>5</sup> We recognize that the XUAR lies within the district covered by the Beijing embassy rather than the Chengdu consulate. We are nonetheless concerned that without the consulate, it will be more difficult to communicate with people in the region, and formulate accurate and comprehensive reports about the situation on the ground.

We respectfully request that the Department send to Congress a detailed strategy to continue robust human rights monitoring in Tibet and the XUAR. We also hope that a Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, as required by the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-228), will be soon appointed and confirmed.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and stand ready to work with you to end human rights abuses in China.

Sincerely,



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Member of Congress

COLIN Z. ALLRED  
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

JULIA BROWNLEY  
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<sup>5</sup> [Public Law No: 116-145](#).

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